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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WATERS; FOR INR/B

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#)

SUBJECT: BIO OF MOHAMAD SHBEIR, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE
ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY IN GAZA

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Following is biographic information developed by post
on Mohamad Shbeir, the former President of the Islamic
University in Gaza.

MOHAMAD SHBEIR

12. (C) Mohamad Shbeir was president of the Islamic
University in Gaza until his resignation in 2005. He taught
biology at that university from 1996 until 2000. Shbeir
served as a member of the Palestinian Central Election
Commission, but resigned in August 2005. An employee who
worked at the CEC while Shbeir served as a member told ConGen
FSN political specialist that Shbeir is an Islamist. Shbeir
studied in Jordan (at some point prior to the late 1980s)
and--according to West Bank Fatah activists--had strong local
connections to the Muslim Brotherhood movement. Following
his education in Jordan, Shbeir graduated from West Virginia
University in the 1990s (exact date unknown). Although
formally an independent, the CEC employee who worked with him
and sources in the President's office in Gaza report that
Shbeir has close ties to Hamas, and both his wife and son
were employed by the Hamas-led PA government after Hamas'
electoral victory in 2006. He is currently working part time
as a researcher at the Islamic University in Gaza.

13. (C) Shbeir has strong Islamist credentials, but a
Gaza-based ConGen PD employee who worked with him at the
Islamic University of Gaza described him as a political
moderate. Shbeir is known to the ConGen public diplomacy
section, having cooperated with the PD section and
participated in its programming prior to the Hamas PLC
victory.

WALLES